

9th Edition

MARCH 2025 | A FAMILY THAT CARES

AFM WELFARE NEWSLETTER

We provide relevant and accessible services to vulnerable children and families in South Africa.



Quality Time Equals Valuable Insights

LEADING FROM THE GROUND UP
PASTOR BONGIWE NAILE - CEO

Each time I attend oversight meetings - supporting management committees responsible for the daily operations of Old Age Homes, Frail Care Centers, and Retirement Villages - I make it a priority to spend a day or two working alongside the operational team. This allows me to experience firsthand the challenges they face each day.

During my recent visit to Touws River AGS Old Age Home, located in one of the smallest towns in the Western Cape, I had the privilege of going operational. It was an incredible experience spending time in the kitchen, laundry, clinic, admin block, and the wards, engaging with both the men and women in our care. Guess what? I had the chance to chat with one of the oldest citizens in South Africa!



AFM Welfare

Pastor Bongiwe Naile



Quality Time Equals Valuable Insights (*cont.*)

You'd expect her to be resting in bed, but she was up, fresh from her bath, sitting in her wheelchair, and happily chatting with others. I was eager to have a meaningful conversation with her, but we ran into a challenge - language! She speaks Afrikaans, and I speak Xhosa. We tried English, but she didn't understand it well, so I gave my little Afrikaans a try... and let's just say, it was an interesting experience!

The most incredible part? This home was set to close in 2024, but thanks to a well-implemented turnaround strategy, it's still running! We thank God for that - jobs were saved, and the elderly residents continue to receive the care they need. What touched me the most was how many of them wanted to chat with me - one by one! Even as I got into the car and headed for the gate, they followed, still eager to talk. Tjooo! I had to reassure them that I'd be back in May and would make time to speak with them as a group. I'm already looking forward to it!

What an inspiring experience! Walking around the home and seeing the beloved olive trees in the yard - so cherished by the residents - was truly special. This visit gave me valuable insight into the daily challenges and sparked ideas for improving the home's overall functioning. We also conducted interviews for a new nursing manager to take over from the 1st of March, following the passing of the previous dedicated leader in December 2024. We believe this new chapter will bring even greater stability and care to the home.



I've been carrying you on my back
from the day you were born,
And I'll keep on carrying you when you're old.
I'll be there, bearing you when you're old and gray.
I've done it and will keep on doing it,
carrying you on my back, saving you.



ISAIAH 46:3-4

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SUPPORT, INVOLVEMENT & DONATIONS

UNITING FOR GREATER IMPACT: THE MERGER OF HOUSE ELDAD & HOUSE JADE

ANDISWA JAKUJA – PROGRAMME MANAGER



House Eldad in Randfontein opened its doors in 2004, with House Jade in Krugersdorp following in 2005, and together these Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs) have successfully cared for many children over the past 20-plus years.

House Eldad

House Eldad caters primarily for children aged 2 to 18 years, with care extended up to 21 years (in line with Children's Act 38 of 2005). Many children, having been in our care since birth and lacking biological parental attachment, continue to receive support beyond 21 years - some remain involved even after becoming independent or moving to disability institutions.

House Jade

House Jade provides care for younger children, aged 0 to 5 years. Both centres serve children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or were orphaned and destitute, and may have mild psychological challenges. The care approach remains consistent across both programmes.



Impact

For over 20 years, House Eldad has been a sanctuary of hope and transformation, guiding children from challenging pasts toward bright futures. Once facing uncertainty, these young individuals are now thriving - pursuing their dreams with strength and resilience. At House Jade, infants and toddlers rescued from life-threatening situations are given a second chance - nurtured into healthy, happy lives. These programs stand as beacons of hope in otherwise desperate circumstances.



AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SUPPORT, INVOLVEMENT & DONATIONS (*cont...*)

Our **Residential Care Program** provides stability, security, and consistency, creating an environment where children can heal and flourish. The **Therapeutic Program**, led by the Residential Social Worker, fosters emotional well-being, offering psychosocial support and referrals for deeper intervention when needed. Through the **Developmental and Recreation Programs**, children build essential life skills in a way that feels natural - because play is a child's language. Activities strengthen their bodies, stimulate cognitive growth, and enhance social skills. By addressing every aspect of a child's well-being, our holistic approach empowers them to thrive - today and for years to come.

Support from the Anchor Assemblies

Randfontein AGS, under the leadership of **Pastor Gerrie Pretorius**, has been the anchor assembly for House Eldad since its inception in 2004. Their deep involvement has shaped the lives of children who arrived as infants in 2004 and continue to transition out of the program. Pastor Gerrie is often moved to tears when he sees these once-small children grow into remarkable young individuals, thanks to the dedicated care, guidance, and support of everyone involved. His daily prayer is that God continues to renew his passion, as his unwavering love for the children, along with the dedication of the Eldad Committee, has been the backbone of House Eldad - even through challenges and changes in staff and committee members. We salute Pastor Gerrie's integrity and thank the entire Eldad Committee for their passion and commitment.



We also extend our gratitude to **Pastor Marius Keyter** and Krugersdorp Central AFM, who served as the anchor assembly for House Jade until 2024. Together with the House Jade Committee, they provided exceptional care and valuable support to the children. We thank them for their leadership and the resources they contributed.



AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SUPPORT, INVOLVEMENT & DONATIONS (*cont...*)

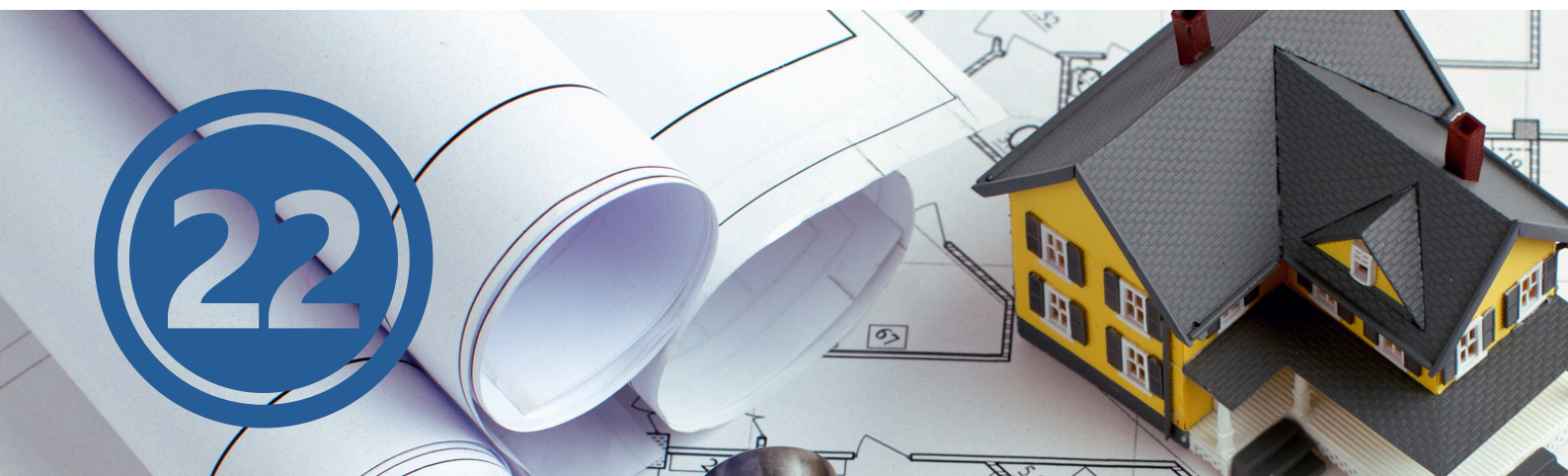
The Reason for the Merger of Houses Eldad and Jade

Since 2022, AFM Welfare has envisioned merging the two CYCCs to streamline operations and reduce costs amid financial challenges. The primary motivation is cost savings: House Eldad's property is spacious enough to accommodate children from both centres after renovations, eliminating the rental expense for House Jade. The merger promises benefits such as cost-cutting, improved time management, and shared resources.



Renovation Plans

The transformation is set to be impressive once completed, though significant work is required to accommodate the additional 12 children from House Jade - particularly babies and toddlers with unique needs. The plan is to consolidate the programs into a single facility that will serve children aged 0 to 18 years, replacing the current setup of two separate houses. At present, House Eldad accommodates 10 children and House Jade houses 12. **The unified centre will be able to accommodate a total of 22 children.**



Call to Action

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the AFM Noordheuwel Assembly, under the leadership of Pastor Mes, for their generous R20,000 donation toward our renovation project. **However, the quotation summary reveals that we still require significant financial support to complete this remarkable initiative.**



R117 000
Structural:
Buildings



R136 044.74
Plumbing



R70 945
Work on the
Garage, Bathroom
& Flatlet



R22 099.41
Electrical



How to Contribute: ●

Make a donation/gift through our secure online donation portal:

DONATE ♥

<https://afmwelfare.org.za/product/donate/>

For larger donations, please contact our Programme Manager:

Andiswa Jakuja

076 111 6042 or 012 753 7940/1



andiswa@afmwelfare.org.za

Exciting times are ahead for the AFM Welfare Family, as we reach a significant milestone and bring a grand vision to life. We eagerly look forward to the expanded Eldad Child and Youth Care Centre. With the unwavering support of our Anchor Assembly, along with our dedicated staff and expert programs, we will continue to nurture our children. Our mission is to empower them to become the best versions of themselves, confidently walking in the plans God has for them.

Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

MATTHEW 6:31-33

Bophelo Special Needs Home

Annelize Essop

Social Worker

Boitumelo Masiu

Centre Manager

Nancy Cidraas

Caregiver

Renee Beukes

Caregiver



WORKING AT BOPHELO: FROM THE HEART OF A SOCIAL WORKER

SAFETY, LOVE, AND OPPORTUNITIES DESPITE LIFE'S ADVERSITIES

ANNELIZE ESSOP – SOCIAL WORKER (BOPHELO SPECIAL NEEDS HOME)

The Special Needs House at Bophelo Child and Youth Care Centre is one of two AFM Welfare Special Needs Homes, alongside Villa Lethemba in Kempton Park. Established in 2006, it is located in Beaconsfield, Kimberley, and provides care for 10 children with disabilities who have been abandoned, orphaned, neglected, or are living with HIV. Many are facing medical conditions such as congenital rubella syndrome (CRS), cerebral palsy, and fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), which impact their physical and intellectual development.

One of our children, who has cerebral palsy and kidney complications, was selected to represent his school in Boccia at the 2025 Toyota SASAPD National Championships in Gqeberha this March. Despite only starting with sport last year, his remarkable progress earned him a spot at nationals. His story is a testament to resilience and the rewards of dedication.

At Bophelo, every achievement is celebrated - whether it's tying a shoelace or buttoning a shirt. High fives and hugs are a big part of our home because sometimes, this is how we express feelings we can't put into words. We might get a little shy when you make a big fuss over us, but in return, you'll get a big smile, a quiet giggle, or a soft 'thank you.' Sometimes, we can be a handful - getting under your feet in our eagerness to help - but please be patient with us. We're just trying to do our best.

WORKING AT BOPHELO: FROM THE HEART OF A SOCIAL WORKER (Cont...)

Being a social worker at a Special Needs House requires authenticity, patience, and creativity. This role has taught me to see each child as an individual - while two children may have the same disability, they are not necessarily alike. In Kimberley and surrounding areas, the demand for Special Needs Houses remains high, as the city's only other centre struggles to keep up, based on frequent enquiries from the community and social workers.



A Day in the Life of a Special Needs Home. A typical day at the Special Needs House starts at 5h00. The children wake up cheerful, still yawning but excited for school. Breakfast is served at 6h15, followed by medication at 6h30. A strong sibling bond exists among them, with older children helping the younger ones get ready and board their transport at 7h00.

For those staying home, the day begins at 7h30 with morning exercises at 8h00, followed by breakfast, medication, and getting dressed. They greet staff with warm hugs and bright smiles before engaging in activities like puzzles, painting, and clay modelling. Lunch is at 11h30, followed by a walk or story time. When the schoolchildren return, they have lunch, complete homework or activities, and enjoy a snack at 15h30 before free play and bath time. Dinner is at 18h00, with evening prayers at 19h00. Before bed, each child shares a heartfelt hug with the Centre Manager and says goodnight to all the other children.

The Emotional and Psychological Care of Children. The caregivers at the Special Needs Home are truly special - loving, passionate, and patient. They care for the children as their own and are deeply protective of them. For some, these caregivers are the only mother figures they know, forming strong bonds of attachment. Through my experience with these children, I've learned that a warm hug and kind words can work wonders in bringing comfort and calm.

The Centre Manager follows a dietitian-approved menu to prepare nutritious meals for the children. Their health is closely monitored in partnership with doctors from the PAEDS (Paediatric Active Enhanced Disease Surveillance) Department at Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital and the local Beaconsfield Clinic to ensure they receive necessary treatment. Additional support comes from dietitians, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and audiologists - whose recommendations are diligently followed by caregivers.

Building attachment to caregivers, even in a temporary setting, is essential for a child's development. It helps them form trusting relationships and fosters a sense of belonging. The children are guided in expressing their emotions appropriately and respectfully. Activities include trips to the shop, reading, counting, colour recognition, matching games, puzzles, memory games, and arts and crafts.

Dealing with loss. The heartbreaking reality of working at a special needs home is that loss is inevitable in some cases, as these children are more vulnerable to serious health conditions. Each passing is a heavy burden, as every child who enters our doors becomes family. Yet, in moments of sorrow, we find strength in the children themselves - whose unwavering resilience and compassion teach us the true meaning of perseverance.

Donations and Volunteering. Extra hands are always needed, and volunteers are welcome to call or visit our office to explore opportunities. Teaching students and educators are especially encouraged to get involved, as our children greatly benefit from passionate, dedicated tutors to assist with homework. Donations are invaluable - your support enables us to continue providing the best care and services to these vulnerable children. Without the support from donors, assemblies and our community, we would not be able to provide the care and protection these children need.

SOCIAL WORKERS – THANK YOU!

March is Social Workers Month! To our AFM Welfare social workers - you are the hands and feet of hope, the voices of the unheard, and the strength behind transformation. Thank you for your passion, your resilience, and the difference you make every single day!

DONATE TO AFM WELFARE: ANYWHERE FROM THE WORLD!



We are so blessed to have a secure donation function on our new website: **www.afm-ags.org.za**. Now all friends, family and supporters of AFM Welfare can donate from anywhere in the world! PayFast is a secure international platform, and we invite you to try it out! Just visit our website, click on the DONATE button and follow the steps.

Without your support, AFM Welfare will not be able to help and assist as many beneficiaries as we do. We want to maintain what we currently do and also do more and impact more lives.



AFM Welfare

AFM Welfare

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